

## The McGee Cabin

*The replica cabin sits on the George Rogers Clark Home Site. The original cabin was occupied by Ben and Venus McGee. The cabin is said to have been 12' by 14' and had a dirt floor. The exact location of the original cabin is not known at this time.*

### First African Community

*One of the first freed-slave communities in the Northwest Territory, named Guinea Bottoms, was situated on this property. The community was established ca. 1802 and was occupied until the 1920s. Villagers included: York, Robert Loyd/Loy, Old Henry, Kitt, Daphne, Caesar, and Cupid. Unfortunately, not a lot is known about this community or its occupants.*

For more information about George Rogers Clark go to <http://www.fallsoftheohiostatepark.org/events.html>.



Back view of Clark's cabin.

### Directions to the Falls of the Ohio State Park

#### Clark Bridge north:

Take a left at the traffic light at the end of the bridge. Immediately turn left onto Missouri Avenue. Turn right at the next stop sign onto Market St. Veer right onto Riverside Drive, go to the Interpretive Center. Do not go over the levee!

#### I-65 heading south:

Take Exit 0 (Jeffersonville). Veer right at second stop sign. Follow Riverside Drive to the Interpretive Center. Do not go over the levee!

### Directions to the Clark Home Site

It is marked with directional signs from the Interpretive Center and from the intersection of Stansifer Ave. and Clark Blvd.

#### I-65 (North or South):

Take Stansifer Avenue exit. Head west to Clark Blvd. and turn right at stop sign. Go to next stop sign and turn left onto Harrison Avenue. Go ~1 mile, when you go down the hill, the parking lot for the home site is on your left.



### Falls of the Ohio State Park

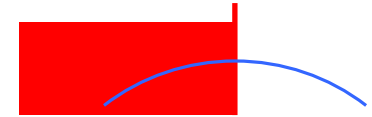
201 West Riverside Drive

Phone: 812-280-9970

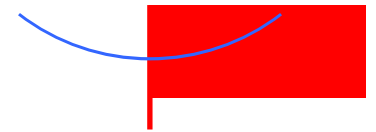
E-mail: [park@fallsoftheohio.org](mailto:park@fallsoftheohio.org)

The McGee and Clark cabins sit on a 7 acre tract that is part of the Falls Of The Ohio State Park and also lies within the boundaries of the 1404 acre National Wildlife Conservation Area giving this historic site, and its flora and fauna, additional federal protection.

## George Rogers Clark Home Site at the Falls of the Ohio State Park



## The McGee Cabin



Front view of the McGee Cabin.

1102 W. Harrison Ave.  
Clarksville, IN 47129

812-280-9970

## From Indentured Servant to Slave to Indentured Servant

White and black settlers came to the Northwest Territory (later divided into Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin) to clear land, explore, and hunt. Africans and Europeans settled beside one another, joining together to fight the British and Indians.

### The Introduction of Slavery

Most early settlers were white Europeans who came to the new world, where they would be allowed to own land and have religious freedom. Because it was expensive to buy passage, many people indentured themselves (signed a contract agreeing to work a number of years for land and paid passage). The first Africans who came to the new world were treated as indentured servants. Indentured servants performed all types of manual labor.



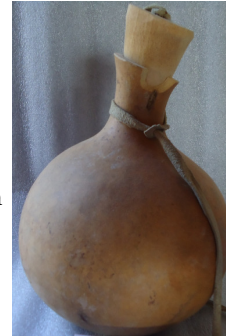
3-legged stool

Because indentured servants did not have to re-indenture themselves after their contract was fulfilled, the Virginia Government (who set the tone for the rest of the colonies) made it harder for a servant to leave by changing the law so non-land owning servants could not easily purchase property. Thus, having nowhere else to live, indentured servants had few opportunities and therefore kept signing indenture papers.

The Dutch brought the first Africans to the new world in 1672. Chattel slavery (one person owns another) was enacted in the 1798 Slave Codes (laws). This law regulated and controlled Africans' work, travel, and personal associations. These codes traveled to Kentucky and the Northwest Territory when more settlers arrived.

## Northwest Territory and Slavery

In 1779, George Rogers Clarks' victories over the British in the NW Territory helped pave the way for the NW Territory to be given to the United States at the end of the American Revolution.



Gourd Water Bottle

In 1787, President Thomas Jefferson signed the NW Ordinance that included a decree that the new states of Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan, would not allow slavery and everyone would be equal. All former slaves were freed. However, many did not have enough money to buy land and if they left the territory, they might be enslaved again. Whether through necessity or from being coerced by their former masters, many African slaves signed indenture servant contracts. After working for up to 30 years, they would receive a cow, a plow, and a plot of land. With their new freedoms, some of the former slaves made their own communities. One such community, called Guinea Bottoms, was established on the George Rogers Clark Home Site in 1802-1803.

### An Inside Look: Living Quarters

A typical servants cabin had a loft for sleeping, a dirt floor with a fireplace, a stick/mud chimney, and crude seating. Bedding consisted of cornhusk pillows and mattresses, a plank table attached to the wall, nails to hang clothing on, and sometimes a hole was dug in the floor to act as a secure place to hide personal items or store food.



Iron fat lamp with rag wick

## Timeline

1605—Jamestown was founded as the first English colony in the new world. 75% of people who came to the new world were indentured servants.

1660—first slave codes were passed in Virginia by the British government.

1672 - Royal African Co. (Dutch ) began to offer a steady supply of African workers.

1710—system of chattel slavery was in full use.

1776—American Revolution began.

1778—George Rogers Clark founded Louisville, KY, when he built a small fort on Corn Island.

1779—G.R. Clark captured Fort Sackville at Vincennes securing the North West Territory.

1781—American Revolution ended.

1783—G. R. Clark surveyed and founded a town he named after himself: Clarksville.

1787—Northwest Ordinance was passed, forbidding slavery in the territory north and west of the Ohio River. This set the stage for the abolition of slavery.

1802-1803—G.R. Clark built his cabin on a property he called "Point of Rock". Guinea Bottoms was established.

1806—Meriwether Lewis, William Clark (G.R. Clarks' brother) and York returned from their trip west. It is recorded that York asked William Clark for his freedom.

1809—York was granted his freedom and went to live with his wife in Kentucky. He started a freighting business and is reported to have died of cholera before 1832.

1818—General George Rogers Clark died.

1830—Ben and Venus McGee left Clarksville to an unrecorded destination.